



**Montana Fish,  
Wildlife & Parks**

**1420 E 6th Ave, PO Box 200701 Helena, MT 59620-0701  
(406) 444-1267**

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST**

### **PART I. Purpose of and Need for Action**

**1. Project Title:** Great Falls Trap & Skeet Club

**2. Type of Proposed Action:**

Purchase Voice Call Sets #1-4, Wired Canterbury Voice calls, 6 ft park benches and install connectors (sidewalks) at the 27 yard line on Traps 1, 2, & 3.

**3. Location Affected by Proposed Action:** Range improvements will occur on site of existing 30 year old range located at 183 Ulm North Frontage Rd., Ulm, MT. Two and one half miles north of Ulm on the frontage road and approximately six miles south of Great Falls on the same frontage road. 50.5 acres located in the SW ¼ NW ¼ of Sec. 34 & in the SE ¼ NE ¼ of Sec. 33; T20N, R2E P.M.M. Cascade County, Montana (See Map 1).

**4. Agency Authority for the Proposed Action:** MCA87-1-276 through 87-1-279 (Legislative established policies and procedures for the establishment and improvement of shooting ranges) MCA87-2-105 (Departmental authority to expend funds to provide training in the safe handling and use of firearms and safe hunting practices). The Montana Legislature has authorized funding for the establishment of a Shooting Range Development Program providing financial assistance for the development of shooting ranges. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks has responsibility for the administration of the program, including the necessary guidelines and procedures governing applications for funding assistance under the program.

To be eligible for grant assistance, a private shooting club or a private organization:

- (a)(i) shall accept in its membership any person who holds or is eligible to hold a Montana hunting license and who pays club or organization membership fees;*
- (ii) may not limit the number of members;*
- (iii) may charge a membership fee not greater than the per-member share of the club's or organization's reasonable cost of provision of services, including establishment, improvement, and maintenance of shooting facilities and other membership services; and*

*(iv) shall offer members occasional guest privileges at no cost to the member or invited guest and shall make a reasonable effort to hold a public sight-in day each September, when the general public may use the shooting range for a day-use fee or at no cost; or  
(b) shall admit the general public for a reasonable day-use fee.*

**5. Need for the Action(s):** Reduce expense, manpower and maintenance, using wired voice call systems. Connectors (sidewalks) are needed at the 27 yard line to eliminate “mud” mess and handicapped access is difficult on the 27 yard line. On deck shooters and observers have no adequate place to comfortably wait and observe shooting activities.

**6. Objectives for the Action(s):** Reduce manpower and maintenance expenses, improving the call and release time for birds. Add connectors to the 27 yard line eliminating mud and improving handicapped access. Provide 6ft. park type benches for on deck shooters and observers.

**7. Maps and Supporting Figures:**



**Map 1 – Area Map showing Great Falls Trap & Skeet Club location. The club is located on the Frontage Rd. off of I-15 between Ulm and Great Falls, MT. Collins Rd is cutting across the**

northwest corner of the image.

**8. Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected:**

Range is approximately 50.5 acres, but improvements are limited to a much smaller area of less than one acre of the range.

**9. Affected Environment (A brief description of the affected area of the proposed project):**

The surrounding area and most of range is or was formerly agricultural primarily used for dry land farming. The area affected is the existing +30 year old Great Falls Trap and Skeet Club on 50.5 acres approximately 2.5 miles north of Ulm on the north or west side of Interstate Highway 15 (Map 1).

**10. Description of Project:** Purchase Voice Call Sets #1-4 and a wired Canterbury Voice call system. Install four 6 ft park benches and build concrete 27 yard connectors (sidewalks) on Trap 1, 2, & 3. The 27 yard connectors will require minor excavation normal for pouring concrete sidewalks.

**11. List any Other Local, State, or Federal Agency that has Overlapping or Additional Jurisdiction:**

**(a) Permits, Licenses and/or Authorizations:**

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>
N/A	

**(b) Funding:**

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	\$6,841

**12. Affiliations, Cooperating Agencies, User Groups and/or Supporting Groups:**

(Tiered EA from 2007 EA)

Cascade County Sheriff's Department, the Great Falls Police Department, Montana Highway Patrol, Boy Scouts, Air Force and Army National Guard, retriever club, hunter's education, 4-H, etc.

**13. History of the Planning and Scoping Process, and Any Public Involvement:**

Proposed range improvements and safety enhancements had been discussed within the membership of the club and with the associated project vendors and contractors. No public involvement was deemed necessary.

**14. List of Agencies Consulted/Contacted During Preparation of the EA:**

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

**15. Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor:**

James W. Burman, 2398 Old US Highway 91, Cascade, MT 59421, (406) 468-2751

**16. Other Pertinent Information:** Previous EA completed in 2007.

Shooting range applications require the participant's governing body to approve by resolution its submission of applications for shooting range funding assistance. Resolution Date: March 3, 2009

**PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

**Abbreviated Checklist – The degree and intensity determines extent of Environmental Review. An abbreviated checklist may be used for those projects that are not complex, controversial, or are not in environmental sensitive areas)**

**Table 1. Potential impact on physical environment.**

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources				X		
2. Terrestrial or aquatic life and/or habitats				X		#2
3. Introduction of new species into an area				X		
4. Vegetation cover, quantity & quality				X		
5. Water quality, quantity & distribution (surface or groundwater)				X		#5
6. Existing water right or reservation				X		
7. Geology & soil quality, stability & moisture				X		
8. Air quality or objectionable odors				X		
9. Historical & archaeological sites				X		#9
10. Demands on environmental resources of land, water, air & energy				X		
11. Aesthetics				X		

**Comments**

**2. & 5.** There are no delineated wetlands and no natural water sources within the area proposed for development.

9. This project uses no federal funds; therefore Federal 106 Regulations do not apply, nor is the proposed project on state owned property so the State Antiques Act also does not apply.

**Table 2. Potential impacts on human environment.**

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Social structures and cultural diversity				X		
2. Changes in existing public benefits provided by wildlife populations and/or habitat				X		
3. Local and state tax base and tax revenue				X		
4. Agricultural production				X		#4
5. Human health				X		#5
6. Quantity & distribution of community & personal income				X		
7. Access to & quality of recreational activities				X		#7
8. Locally adopted environmental plans & goals (ordinances)				X		
9. Distribution & density of population and housing				X		
10. Demands for government services				X		
11. Industrial and/or commercial activity				X		

**Comments**

4. The site is adjacent to surrounding agricultural land.

5. Range site plans, construction and the ongoing operational and maintenance plans meet the standards of safety for the range participants and the public at large.

7. Range will provide year round controlled access and fulfils a need for a range to accommodate law enforcement training, hunter education, bow-hunter safety, and public shooting, admitting the non-member general public for reasonable day use fee.

### **Part III. Environmental Consequences**

**Does the proposed action involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely harmful if they were to occur?** NO

**Does the proposed action have impacts that are individually minor, but cumulatively significant or potentially significant?** This proposed action has no impacts that are individually minor, but cumulatively significant or potentially significant. Cumulative impacts have been assessed considering any incremental impact of the proposed action when they are combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, and no significant impacts or substantially controversial issues were found. There are no extreme hazards created with this project and there are no conflicts with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan.

#### **Identification of the Preferred Alternatives:**

The proposed alternative A, alternative B and the no action alternative were considered.

- **Alternative A (Proposed Alternative)** Purchase Voice Call Sets #1-4, Wired Canterbury Voice calls, 6 ft park benches and install 27 yard connectors on Trap 1, 2, & 3.
- **Alternative B (No Action Alternative)** Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Shooting Sports Grant money would be denied and the area will remain an active shooting complex without additional equipment and 27 yard connectors.

**Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:** Two alternatives have been considered, **A** (Proposed Alternative) and **B** (No Action Alternative). There were no other alternatives that were deemed reasonably available, nor prudent.

Neither the proposed alternative (**A**) nor the no action alternative (**B**) would have any significant negative environmental or potentially negative consequences.

- There are beneficial consequences to Acceptance of the **Proposed Alternative (A)** increasing shooting sports opportunities in the Great Falls area reducing manpower and maintenance expenses, improved bird release and shooting opportunity, and improved handicapped access on 27 yard positions.
- The **No Action Alternative (B)** would be to not provide improvements in manpower, maintenance or quality of shooting, and handicapped access, but to continue on with current trap range shooting activities.

**Describe any Alternatives considered and eliminated from Detailed Study:**

NONE

**List and explain proposed mitigative measures (stipulations):**

NONE

**Individuals or groups contributing to, or commenting on, this EA:**

James W. Burman, 2398 Old US Highway 91, Cascade, MT 59421  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

**PART IV NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT**

All of the pertinent or potential impacts of the project have been reviewed, discussed, and analyzed. None of the project reviewed were complex, controversial, or located in an environmentally sensitive area. The project being proposed is on properties owned by the Great Falls Trap and Skeet Club. The low impact activities proposed, and the increased recreational opportunity, all indicate that this should be considered the final version of the environmental assessment. There are no significant environmental or economic impacts associated with the proposed alternative (A). The Great Falls Trap and Skeet Club's proposed alternative, to provide improved shooting opportunity and handicapped access is supported by its members and the public. Therefore, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks should approve the proposed alternative (A) for the expansion proposals outlined in Part I paragraphs 2 & 10.

**EA prepared by:** GENE R. HICKMAN  
MS. Wildlife Management  
Ecological Assessments  
Helena, MT 59602

**Date Completed:** June 2, 2010

**PART V. EA CONCLUSION SECTION**

**Recommendation and justification concerning preparation of EIS:**

None required.

**Describe public involvement, if any:**

Announcement for EA comment will be published in the Great Falls Tribune and on the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks website to allow an opportunity for public review. Additionally the EA will be available for review on the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks website.